

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 EA-07 NEA-10 ISO-00 FEA-01

ERDA-05 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00

EB-08 FPC-01 H-01 INR-07 INT-05 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-05 OMB-01 PM-04 USIA-06 OES-06 SP-02 SS-15

STR-04 TRSE-00 ACDA-07 PA-01 PRS-01 /139 W

-----231201Z 086482 /14

R 222045Z APR 77

FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7373

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY QUITO

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

USINT BAGHDAD

AMCONSUL DHARAN

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L CARACAS 4065

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EO 11652 GDS

TAGS: ENRG OPEC VE IR IZ KU QA SA

SUBJ: MIDDLE EAST VISIT OF PRESIDENT PEREZ

REF: CARACAS 3879

SUMMARY: PRESIDENT PEREZ PLAYED DOWN HIS POSSIBLE ROLE IN

ARRANGING A SETTLEMENT OF THE OPEC PRICE SPLIT AS HE DESCRIBED THE PURPOSE OF HIS MIDDLE EAST TRIP. INSTEAD, HE EMPHASIZED THE IMPORTANCE FOR OPEC UNITY TO ADVANCE THE NEEDS OF THE THIRD WORLD. HE ALSO EXPRESSED SUPPORT FOR THE CREATION OF A PALESTINIAN STATE, A NEW DEPARTURE IN VENEZUELAN POLICY. END SUMMARY.

2. ON THE EVE OF HIS DEPARTURE FOR THE MIDDLE EAST, PRESIDENT PEREZ REVIEWED THE PURPOSE OF HIS TRIP AT A BREAKFAST PRESS CONFERENCE FOR FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS AND IN A NATIONALLY TELEVISED INTERVIEW. IN BOTH INSTANCES, HE STRESSED AS HIS PRIMARY INTEREST THE STRENGTHENING OF VENEZUELA'S TIES WITH THE OPEC COUNTRIES AND THE UNIFICATION OF OPEC SUPPORT FOR THE THIRD WORLD.

3. PEREZ SAID HE WAS NOT EXPECTING MIRACLES FROM THE TRIP AND WOULD NOT BE CARRYING AN IMMEDIATE AND FINAL SOLUTION TO THE OPEC PRICE SPLIT. HE INSISTED THAT THE PRICE QUESTION WAS NOT A MAJOR FACTOR IN HIS VISITS BUT REITERATED THE GOV'S OFT REPEATED OPTIMISM THAT A SOLUTION WOULD BE FOUND IN THE NEAR FUTURE AND THAT VENEZUELA WOULD ACT ONLY WITH THE OTHER MEMBERS AND NOT ON ITS OWN.

4. HE DESCRIBED OPEC UNITY AS MORE IMPORTANT THAN PRICE UNITY, AND SAID HIS PRIMARY PURPOSE WAS TO PROMOTE THE IDEAL THAT OPEC WAS AN INSTRUMENT TO FURTHER THE OBJECTIVES OF THE THIRD WORLD AND THE NEW INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC ORDER, AND WAS NOT A CARTEL SEEKING BENEFITS SOLELY FOR ITS MEMBERS. HE EXPLAINED HIS STOP AT OPEC HEADQUARTERS IN VIENNA AS

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PROVIDING THE OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE THIS POINT WITH THOSE OPEC MEMBERS NOT ON HIS ITINERARY.

5. ONE NEW POINT WHICH EMERGED WAS THE PRESIDENT'S SUPPORT FOR THE CREATION OF A PALESTINIAN STATE. RESPONDING TO A QUESTION ON THE ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT, HE REFERRED TO VENEZUELA'S POLICY OF NEUTRALITY, HE THEN DESCRIBED THE GOV'S POSITION AS ONE OF RESPECT FOR THE ARABS AND BELIEF IN THE NEED FOR THE FORMATION OF A PALESTINIAN STATE. HE ADDED, HOWEVER, THAT MIDDLE EAST PEACE SHOULD NOT BE AT THE COST OF THE DISAPPEARANCE OF ISRAEL. HE SAID HE WOULD NOT BE OPPOSED TO MEETING REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PLO DURING HIS TRIP, BUT THAT HE HAD NO PLANS FOR SUCH A MEETING.

6. THE POLITICAL OPPOSITION VOICED GENERAL SUPPORT FOR PEREZ'S TRIP, BUT REPRESENTATIVES OF BOTH THE OTHER MAJOR PARTY (COPEI) AND THE LEFTIST MAS PARTY TOOK THE OPPORTUNITY TO CALL FOR PUBLIC DISCLOSURE OF THE TERMS OF THE BILATERAL AGREEMENT SIGNED WITH THE SOVIET UNION REGARDING OIL SHIPMENTS TO CUBA. THIS AGREEMENT WAS SIGNED BY THE PRESIDENT DURING HIS NOVEMBER TOUR OF EUROPEAN

COUNTRIES.

7. COMMENT. WHILE PRESIDENT PEREZ WOULD CLEARLY LIKE TO RETURN FROM THE MIDDLE EAST HAVING PLAYED A MAJOR ROLE IN HEALING THE PRICE SPLIT, HE IS ALSO WELL AWARE OF THE UNCERTAINTIES INVOLVED. GOV OFFICIALS ARE NO LONGER PUBLICLY CLAIMING THAT A SETTLEMENT WILL BE REACHED BEFORE JULY, AND ONE MINISTRY OF ENERGY OFFICIAL TOLD US HE SAW LITTLE LIKELIHOOD OF A PRICE COMPROMISE BEFORE THE END OF THE YEAR. END COMMENT.
VAKY

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PETROLEUM, DISPUTES, CHIEF OF STATE VISITS, SPEECHES, CONSORTIUMS, PRICES, INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION
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Decaption Note:
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977CARACA04065
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770142-0382
Format: TEL
From: CARACAS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
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Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770430/aaaaazqv.tel
Line Count: 127
Litigation Code IDs:
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Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 CARACAS 3879
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 15-Nov-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2729046
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MIDDLE EAST VISIT OF PRESIDENT PEREZ
TAGS: ENRG, OVIP, VE, IR, IZ, KU, QA, SA, OPEC, (PEREZ, CARLOS ANDRES)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/9a811fa1-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009